

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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#### CHAPTER XXXI. A DINNER PARTY.

It was a very original and a very cheerful evening party. The sisters had made no great toilette, this being out of their power, but Sibyl had insisted on the suitability of a little pink bow being fastened at Grace's throat, and a similar one for herself, adding that "now we both look perfect!" Sibyl thought with a sigh of a beautiful silk dress which she fancied would make her still more bewitching; but that dress had to remain an imaginary possession.

Frau Hanson was arrayed in sober black, with a high widow's cap on her head, and Gretchen wore a white dress and danced with delight as she skipped upstairs, though she became demure directly she entered the Professor's rooms. What a flow of words followed then from the Professor and his wife! The former bowed low to the English ladies, complimented them openly on their beauty, and presented them to their compatriots. However, he only managed to pronounce the name of Mr. Chones, so that the sisters believed, as did Gretchen, that Gordon was the other Mr. Chones.

Sidney was in high spirits, and began a lively conversation with Sibyl, who, whilst indulging in lively repartee, forgot the sorrows of life. Gretchen hung on to her, listening open-mouthed to the quick English questions and answers, and made quite happy by an occasional word

from "Herr Chones." Austin Gordon devoted himself to Frau Hanson; he saw Grace preferred being allowed to remain a spectator, for she could not at first get over her shyness. But then very soon followed the grand dinner, and this effectually unloosed the tongue of Frau Hanson.

The goodly spread was soon the subject of conversation between her and the Professorin, and one could hear constant allusions to a little salt and a seasoning of onion, and so on.

Grace had been placed between the Professor and Austin at the round table; and at first she devoted herself to answering the Professor's questions on the subject of English society, of which Grace, of course, knew nothing.

Austin, in the meanwhile, listened with a quiet smile of enjoyment, and presently Grace, finding herself among such friendly people, relaxed a little; once, indeed, she even laughed happily at the Professor's tirade on German literature.

"You, do not allow us many deep thinkers," she said; then turning towards Austin, and raising her eyes towards him for the first time, she added: "I am afraid you have not maintained the honour of our country enough."

Austin felt so glad that she could say "our country" in that quiet voice. He answered in a lower tone:

"You see, Miss Evans, I have to take refuge in silence when our dear Professor begins; he must have the field to himself; any enemy, however brave, would retreat before him, even those of our country."

The slight emphasis on these words suddenly recalled Grace to the real facts of her life.

"I must try to adopt German ideas,"

she said, in the same voice. "Perhaps some day I shall even feel truly German."

"And discard home-sickness? Please don't say that; I do not like to hear English people disown their own country."

Austin spoke gravely; the truth was that he could not bear to hear Grace wishing to become a naturalised German subject.

"Oh, it isn't that I do not love England," she said, feeling a little sorry that this courteous, brave-looking man should think her disloyal; "only circumstances which——"

"I know of no circumstances which could make me give up England," he said, with warmth.

"I think your duty might do so," said Grace, very slowly and quietly; and at that moment Austin nearly added:

"Perhaps you could make me give up England." Happily he only thought it, or Grace might have looked upon him as somewhat demented.

But nevertheless he did think it, for at that moment a strange feeling came over him. This girl, with her simple manner and her simple words, had made him her slave, and he said to himself:

"Miss Evans—Grace—shall be my wife, or I shall never marry." A rash vow—a vow many a man falling in love at first sight has made, and many a man has broken, but some few have made and kept.

It was some time before Austin spoke again, so that Grace half thought that she had offended him, little dreaming what was the real state of his mind; but then love was as far from Grace's mind as is the moon above the earth. Love was something beautiful, of course, but not made for her to handle; for Grace had duties which never left her heart or her brain—to earn her living honestly and to take care of Sibyl.

"Do you find the German children more or less intelligent than the English youth?" asked the Professor, who was very much smitten by the appearance of the English ladies, and began to think that Mr. Chones had been right in saying that to see them was to confide in them.

"I never taught in England," said Grace, wishing to avoid a comparison.

"Ach! So?"

"I expect all children are the same. I love them dearly."

Austin remembered the little Minna, and believed this. She had not taught in England. Then they were orphans, per-

haps, or they had suddenly lost all their fortune. The very idea seemed grand and natural. The Professor turned the conversation.

"Do you see, Fräulein, that bouquet on the table? That is my wife's present to me. I always give her one on her natal day, and she returns the compliment on mine."

"The flowers are beautiful. I do miss a garden," said Grace, suddenly seeing in her mind's eye the dear old garden at home, with all its old-fashioned flowers.

"An English garden is unique, is it not, Miss Evans? My mother writes to me that her garden is now looking beautiful. The rhododendrons are in full glory."

"Ah, yes, the rhododendrons," sighed Grace, little knowing that she and her neighbour were mentioning the identical garden.

"Are you fond of heathy moors?" he asked next, still thinking of his mother's last letter.

Grace felt herself turning pale. He did not know how cruel these questions were.

"Heathy moors," she answered, almost in a dream; "but, but——"

Then, with a sudden movement, very unusual in Grace, she looked up at him.

"But would you mind not talking about them? It reminds me of a very dear and lost home."

"I beg your pardon," he apologised, humbly. "I will never mention such things again. Will you forgive me for my unintentional stupidity?"

Grace was herself again.

"Oh, you could not know—— I do not think I thanked you properly the other day about little Anna. The sleeping child on my lap prevented me from——"

"I was more than rewarded," he said, very earnestly.

Grace did not know that men do not usually use such words in earnest. She had seen so few men, and only thought that this one was a type of many others. He was very, very kind and wise. She wondered whether her father had been thus in his youth, and whether——

Across the table Sibyl was hearing stories of college life—boating, riding, all sorts of things, which entertained her, and which Sidney was more than enchanted to talk about. He found his young lady so wonderfully unsophisticated, so unlike other young ladies, that she was quite "refreshing."

"Have you been to the theatre here yet, Miss Evans?" he asked.

"No; I should like to go very much. I have never entered a theatre."

"Never? Not even to see a pantomime?"

"No, never. I am not sure whether Grace would go," she said, glancing across at Grace, who looked so quiet and staid.

"You see, we have no one to go with us."

"I should be delighted to escort you," said Sidney, rather maliciously, to see what Sibyl would say.

"Thank you; you are very kind. I should like it very much; only Grace would not, I know. She would say we could not afford it."

"Oh, it costs a mere nothing in Germany; you would not have to think of it."

Sibyl shook her head. Even she thought this rather dangerous ground.

"The Germans go a great deal themselves. Have you ever seen the German Count, who lives opposite, and is so often to be seen on the balcony?"

Sibyl suddenly blushed. However, Sidney did not see her.

"Yes, I have seen him there," she said, quietly.

"Well, he goes nearly every night to the theatre. Next week they play 'Faust.'"

"I don't think Grace will go," said Sibyl, a little impatiently.

"Your sister is very discreet, I see," said Sidney.

"Oh, Grace is very particular," answered Sibyl, feeling a little put out that her sister should be so; then she suddenly remembered Mrs. Johnson's novel. The heroine in it had enjoyed life so much, only her pleasures began after she was married. When would all this stupid, humdrum life end for Sibyl? When would she be married, and have some liberty, and enough money to buy beautiful dresses? She knew she was prettier than most people, so why should she not also have a lover? Why had Mrs. Gordon exiled them to this stupid little German country town, where she could see only school-girls and stiff mistresses? Why—why?

Suddenly the Professor's health had to be drunk, and this was followed by such a bowing and nodding, and such compliments, that nothing but the Vaterland and the German tongue could be thought about. After this every one went to the salon, the windows were flung open, and as there was a balcony, the gentlemen brought chairs for the ladies, and then the talking

and laughing began again, with the addition of cigars.

When at last the evening came to an end, little Gretchen had fallen fast asleep, with her head leaning against Grace, who did not like to rouse her. Austin had sat by them all the time, saying little but thinking much, and only anxious to prolong the pleasure. Early hours were happily still the fashion in this primitive society, and the Professor was anxious to retire to rest. He tapped his forehead and said the brain must be well taken care of. Austin prepared to accompany the ladies to their door, an all too short journey down one flight of stairs, and Sidney took Gretchen bodily up in his arms, declaring that she was too sleepy to walk, and then at Frau Hanson's door they had to say more good-nights.

"Good night, Miss Evans," said Austin, in a low voice, intended only for her ears, amid the general noise made by Sidney and Gretchen. "Will you promise to make use of me if I can do anything to serve you, because, you see, I am at least your countryman? You cannot imagine what pleasure it would give me."

This was true enough. Grace never guessed she had gained a lover, and said, simply:

"Thank you very much. Certainly, I will ask you before any one else; but it is not likely that I shall want anything."

"One never knows what may turn up in a strange land. Anyhow, it is a satisfaction to know one has a friend."

"Then I will think of you as a friend," she said, smiling; but there was not a shade of coquetry in the smile, and Austin knew it.

#### CHAPTER XXXII. ON THE BERG.

THE next morning life seemed changed to Sibyl. She was quite merry and not at all cross or sad, so that Grace said to herself: "A little amusement has done her good. Dear Sibyl! how happy she looked, and how well she talked to Mr. Jones; but I like the other one the best."

During their breakfast, a very modest repast compared with the glories of the Professor's table, Sibyl remarked:

"Grace, will you some day take me to the theatre? Next week they have a very nice opera, Mr. Jones was saying so last night."

"Oh, no, Sibyl, we could not afford it. Besides, it would not do for us to——"

"But everybody goes here, Mr. Jones says. It is not as if we were in England, where only rich people can afford it; and now that I work so hard and go off every day in all weathers, I think I might spend a few thalers on amusement."

"Sibyl, you know I don't grudge you anything we have; but we must be very careful unless we wish to appeal to Mrs. Gordon, and we neither of us should like that."

"I should think not, indeed!" and Sibyl turned angrily away. She could not bear to hear that name.

"Well, then, how can we afford any extra expense?"

"You are always thinking the worst of things," said Sibyl, impatiently, taking up her hat and going out. Grace looked after her a minute, hoping for one look of forgiveness or one smile; but none came, and as Sibyl's graceful figure disappeared, and a morning sunbeam shot across her golden hair, making it appear that a beam had stayed behind, Grace suddenly remembered the words of Dr. Smith—dear, kind Dr. Smith: "It is a pity Sibyl is so pretty." Once she had gloried in her sister's looks, but now she almost echoed the wish.

"If only Nan were here, there would be no trouble; but now we are so alone." A deep sigh, very deep for one so young, and then Grace set about her occupations, trying to be brave.

By-and-by the postman left a letter for her. How much she loved that official personage when he brought her a letter from Nan, always breathing new courage into her and new hope. To-day Nan said that she was always thinking of them, and that the little store of money was growing. "Write, my child, the first time you really want any, and if you ever cannot do without me, remember I will come."

This letter cleared away the morning cloud; besides, June had come—a warm, bright June—and when the children came in like so many twittering sparrows, she made them sit round the window so that the heat should not make them fretful. Grace could manage children without any trouble; that was one of her talents. By-and-by came a knock. Having no little girl on her lap, she rose to open the door, and saw Austin holding a large bunch of beautiful flowers in his hand. He had pretended to Sidney that he required some pens, so had taken a short morning walk to the market, and this was the result.

"I beg your pardon for disturbing you, Miss Evans, but Frau Hanson told me to knock. You said you liked flowers, and I have brought you a few."

"How lovely they are! How good of you!" said Grace. "Sibyl will be so much pleased."

Austin lingered a moment trying to find something suitable to say, for to see Grace with her sweet face half buried in flowers was a sight that did him good.

"I am glad you like them. They are very fresh. Mr. Jones is waiting to begin work, so I must not keep him waiting."

He smiled as he lifted his hat, and she answered his smile before closing the door.

Nan's letter and the nosegay were really great events in her dull life: both had brought her such messages of goodwill, and to the lonely girl the least touch of sympathy was a godsend; but then, she would have been equally grateful had Sidney brought her the flowers—so thought Austin. As usual, Sibyl came in to-day at half-past twelve; she admired the flowers, but appeared rather restless.

"Do let us take a long walk on the hills, Grace; it is so fine, and we have a half-holiday. These houses seem to wish to close me in and kill me. I long for the real open country. We will walk as far as we can from Unterberg, and then we may find some spot to remind us of our own home and the dear moors; only, we shall not find such heather."

Grace assented, glad that Sibyl said no more about the theatre, and seemed to have forgotten it. Directly they could get out they walked across the old town with its narrow streets and its wide marketplace, its grand cathedral now so familiar to them, and its many red-coats. Then, leaving the houses behind them and skirting the large cemetery, with its endless symbols and varied ornaments in memory of loved souls; then, again, up some narrow lanes till they began the ascent of the Berg, from which the town took its name. The ascent was wearisome, but every step brought them nearer to purer air, and every time they looked back there were glorious views. In the distance, a faint line of the Alsatian mountains, the blue blending with the sky, so delicate and faint were the outlines. At the top of the hill there was a summer-house, and further on a ruined chapel.

"This is lovely," said Sibyl, throwing herself on the grass when at last they had reached a clear space, dotted with wild



strawberry blossoms and all sorts of sweet, minute flowers. "Grace, didn't we have a nice evening last night? I like the Professor and his wife—such funny old people, but kind-hearted—and the Englishmen were nice; but I think Germans have nicer manners."

"Germans in general? Oh, Sibyl, I don't agree with you at all. I think Englishmen are quite perfect when they are like that other Mr. Jones."

"Why, Mr. Jones calls him mentor. He is his mentor as you are mine, Grace!" and Sibyl laughed. "But you are not one bit like me; you don't care for anything but just your duty—every day the same thing."

"Oh, I should like many other things; but what is the use of wishing for the impossible?"

"Yes; that is it, Grace. You can bow to the inevitable. I can't. When I think of all that has happened to us and how we have been treated, it makes me so angry, so ready to——"

"Oh, hush! Sibyl, don't please talk like that."

It was a relief to Sibyl; but she stopped, for Grace could not understand her wicked feelings, so she might as well keep them to herself. They sat on in silence a little while, till Sibyl exclaimed:

"Grace, there they are, I do believe."

And the "they" emerged from a path below them, scrambling up the sides of the hill in utter disregard of bushes and underwood. "They," on their side only perceived the sisters when they were just springing on to the path in front of them. Austin suddenly felt how glad he was he had come for a long walk instead of dawdling about the gardens, as he had wished to do, in the hope of meeting Grace.

"Miss Evans, how curious we should meet you!" he said, after the ordinary salutation, whilst Sidney sat down by Sibyl.

"This is the usual walk for the Unterbergers," she said, smiling, "so we did as others do on a fine day. When we were at Fräulein Storme's—you don't know her—we often brought the pupils here."

"But then they spoil the pleasure," said Sibyl. "We had to see that none of them made their dresses dirty, or tore their clothes, or lost themselves."

"It must have added to the excitement," said Sidney, laughing. "I wonder if I spoil your walks, mentor?"

"You certainly are a great anxiety,"

was the answer. "What would you do, Miss Evans, if you had an overgrown schoolboy to look after?"

It was very delightful to sit on the grass by Grace's side, and watch the expression of her face as she answered:

"I should do my best, I suppose."

"The duty that England expects from her sons and daughters," said Sidney. "I am afraid my mentor has often repented saddling himself with me."

"I have left off repenting," said Austin, knowing it was a true word he was speaking in jest.

After a few more remarks, Austin made an effort. He did not wish to make Grace sorry that she knew him.

"Come, get up, Sidney; if you once go in for repose we shall not finish our walk." Still he had touched her hand, and he wanted nothing more to make him happy for that day at least. Grace was to him so unlike other women—so free from self-consciousness—that Austin wondered if she would ever understand his feeling towards her.

"We shall know German so well that we shall have to learn English again," said Sidney, as they walked on rapidly.

"Yes. May, June, July," said Austin. "June is nearly over, though, and we came for three months."

"There's July to 'sprechen sie' in. I never should have believed that I could enjoy 'German home life' so much. By the way, that book was a one-sided view of it."

"Our view is bounded by the Professor's opinion."

"Don't you own now, Gordon, that the youngest Miss Evans is the prettiest girl you ever saw, only she is so young, so unlike other girls? What a pity she is only a teacher!"

Austin felt with a certain bound of pleasure that there was no fear of Sidney falling in love even with a beauty who was only a teacher; he might love Grace silently, perhaps, but without a rival.

"I wonder what their story can be?" was Austin's answer. "It seems a shame to leave them alone like this in a foreign country."

"I dare say they were shopkeepers' daughters. Every one is so well educated nowadays. I declare I can't tell a lady from a shopwoman now. There is Jewson, who married a pastrycook's daughter. They all looked shocked about it at home; but when she appeared she was ever so

much more presentable than Miss Bellew, the banker's daughter, who is so disagreeable."

"I think these girls are ladies, though," said Austin, quietly. "Not that it would alter them whatever they were by birth; but still——"

"Very nice to talk to; but still I prefer Mrs. Sidney being an out-and-out."

There was a little amused smile round the mentor's mouth that spoke volumes. Happily, perhaps, Sidney did not notice it, and Austin, dismissing Sidney's words from his mind, remembered others. "I shall think of you as a friend." Grace meant it, he was sure; she could not tell a lie; but how was he ever to see much of her, the Professor having but one birthday a year, and now only one month being left for their stay at Unterberg?

One month! Could a man woo and win a wife in a month? Yes, if he saw her every day; but if he only met her by accident, what could he do? This difficult problem lasted him during a long walk, and remained unsolved when once more the Professor's door was reached.

"I say, Gordon, Miss Sibyl Evans has never been to a theatre," remarked Sidney, going up the stairs; "and there's 'Faust' on next week. Can't we treat her to a view? The other has never been to one either, and has qualms of conscience about it."

"What nonsense you talk, Sidney! As if we could for a moment suggest to treat these girls! I should not like even to suggest it to Miss Evans."

"Oh, well, I didn't mean any harm; but couldn't we do it as if the Professorin asked them? Let's get a whole box and present it to our hostess, just remarking it will also accommodate the English ladies if she asks them."

"This idea is more feasible," said Austin, fearful of anything that might interrupt the footing he was on with Grace. She might be simple by nature, but she was proud as well, he could see that.

"Suppose they found out?"

"But there would be nothing to find out if we really gave it to the Professorin. She wouldn't know we wished to make the English minds more enlightened." It was really pure good-nature on Sidney's part; but as Austin cared more for the results, he still hesitated.

"Suppose they refused?"

"Well, we should go with the Pro-

fessorin. They play 'Faust,' and very well, too, I believe."

Austin wanted to see Grace again, and this seemed an opening, though he rather reproached himself for the ways and means. After all, there was no harm in it, so the next day they secured the tickets for the box and presented it to their hostess.

"What extravagance! What vanity!" she exclaimed. "The best places; why, no one goes there but the nobility; and six places—who is to fill them up?"

"Ask the English ladies," said Sidney, demurely, "they don't seem to have many friends."

"Ah, poor children, no!" The Professorin had a motherly heart, and at once seized the idea.

"Just so; but still there will be one place. I fear the Professor will not leave his books, he prefers reading 'Faust' in his own room to seeing it acted."

"We don't want any more, but why not ask Frau Hanson?" suggested Sidney, thinking the two ladies could entertain each other.

"Gut, quite a family party we shall be."

So that evening two more of the Professorin's scratchy notes were sent down to the floor below, saying a friend had given her a box to see "Faust" on Tuesday—would the young ladies do her the pleasure of accompanying her? Grace had no secrets from Sibyl—why should she? they were all to each other—so Sibyl, looking over her shoulder, blushed for pleasure, and divined the matter at once. Not so Grace, who was too simple-minded to seek or imagine hidden truths. Only she was vexed at the offer, she knew not why; but a vague undefined fear filled her with dread. Perhaps this pleasure would only make Sibyl more discontented with the life of toil that must be theirs for the future.

"What do you say, Sibyl? It is very kind of the Frau Professorin, isn't it? Only if we accept——"

"Grace, what can be the harm? I have so often wondered what a theatre was like. You must say yes."

So Grace said yes, though her conscience sadly misgave her; only if she made Sibyl angry, what should she do? It was Sibyl who wrote to accept, and whose eyes brightened at the bare idea of next Tuesday; but Grace lay awake a long time, wishing she were older and wiser, and more able to guide her sister.

## MORRIS'S FRIEND.

## A COMPLETE STORY.

WE were up-country fighting Dacoits. I was only a young fellow at the time, new to any sort of active service, and glad to exchange the regular parades and barrack work for a little real fighting, even though it was only against sharp-shooting fellows without much idea of discipline in their wretched heads. Still, it was trying work; the heat was terrific, and we had to make our way through high grass so tall as to entirely conceal us from the enemy, and the enemy from us, except when we came to any raised ground and could look down over the country, or when our scouts from time to time came in with news of them. The disagreeable part of this making our way blindly through the high grass and brushwood was that occasionally a bullet came singing through the thick walls of vegetation on either side, picking off some poor fellow or passing over our heads, though that was not much less trying than if every bullet had hit its mark. I know of nothing more irritating than making one's way through unknown country and hearing the report of an occasional shot to the right or the left, and the whistle of the bullet near you, without being able to see your assailant and give chase. Occasionally, however, they would venture too close or be surprised by us as we turned to right or to left, or reached some more elevated ground, from which we could see them more plainly moving among the grass, and then we generally managed to pick them off before they got away. Many of our men were excellent shots, a thing not too common among British troops, who are too much inclined to think that they will always have to fight against troops drawn up in close formation, so that they have only to industriously "brown" the serried ranks before them to be sure of doing execution. We are, however, beginning to realise that this is a fallacy, and that the amount of execution done by one good shot who takes the trouble to aim more or less before he fires is greater than the indiscriminate firing of three poor or careless shots, whose bullets have a habit of going over the heads of the enemy, and so doing little service in checking an advance, or, supposing we are ever to have a change again in modern warfare, in resisting heavy cavalry. Some of our men were splendid

shots at running game, so to speak, and could pick off a Dacoit at a couple of hundred yards with fair certainty.

We had reached a slight rise, and decided to pass the night there, keeping a sharp look-out for the enemy. The sentries were posted, and I was thinking of turning in, when the surgeon came up to me and asked how my arm was. I had got grazed by a bullet on the march the previous day, and had had to have my arm dressed by Parker. Fortunately it was my left, and so, though I wore it in a sling, it did not interfere much with my duties.

"Oh, it's all right," I said, laughing. "In fact, I hardly think it is necessary to wear this sling. It gets in the way rather, and makes one an object of sympathy which one has not earned. Don't you think I might leave it off?"

"Let me just see how it is getting on," said Parker. "Ah, progressing favourably, I think; but you'd better wear the sling a bit longer. Never mind the undeserved sympathy; when you deserve it you won't get it. Better take it while you can. These flesh wounds are apt to become dangerous in this infernal climate if you don't give the limb proper rest. As for the sling, I consider it most ornamental—makes you look what ladies call interesting, and would be worth a fortune in the matrimonial market."

"Come and have a chat," I said. "I want to know how things are getting on. It seems to me this is rather desultory sort of work, pursuing an enemy you seldom manage to catch sight of, while he seems always to manage to keep his eyes on you. We must have had a dozen men picked off this week by those sharp-shooting devils, and though we generally account for a fair number of the brutes each day, it's poor sort of fighting. By the way, how is Phelps? He was rather badly hit, I believe, wasn't he?"

"Yes," said Parker, gravely. "I'm afraid he won't outlast the night. He was hit in the groin, and is in great pain, and almost delirious, poor fellow. These beggars shot awfully wildly, and their aim must be a good deal spoilt by the tall grass waving to and fro, otherwise one would think they would have killed off the whole detachment ere now. One hears a report of a rifle on one side or the other every few minutes. But then, of course, we are always moving, so they have less chance of hitting. Besides, we don't march in close order. There doesn't seem to be

any fear of their cutting off stragglers. They never intentionally come as near to us as that. Shooting from ambush is more in their line."

"I'm sorry Phelps is so bad," I said. "Any others badly hurt?"

"One other," said Parker, "Hargreaves. He and Morris were on ahead looking out for Dacoits, and got too far in front. Morris rashly went on alone while Hargreaves stopped—to loosen some belt or something—and then walked on to catch him up. Morris, it appears, had turned sharp to the left, and found himself, before he realised what was up, right in the arms of a dozen of these dirty brutes. He fired his revolver three times, wounding two of them, and at the same time warning Hargreaves that something was wrong. But the rest of them closed with him, seeing that he was alone, knocked his revolver out of his hand, and would have chopped him to mincemeat, though he drew his sword and defended himself as well as he could, had not Hargreaves come up at a run, revolver in hand. Whereupon they fled, but not before they had given Morris an ugly lick on the thigh, which brought him down on his knee. Hargreaves shot one of them as he turned to run, and left him writhing like a worm on the earth. The other beggars jumped right and left into the grass. These gentlemen always do that. Then they fire on you from a place of safety till you retire, unless the main body comes up, when they may think it more prudent not to annoy them with a fusillade. Hargreaves suggested that he should carry Morris back towards the main body, who were fast coming up, thinking from the sound of shots that something might be wrong with the two officers on ahead. Morris, however, declared that he couldn't stand being carried with a great cut in his thigh, and suggested that Hargreaves should go back himself and hurry on the main body. Hargreaves not unnaturally objected to leaving him at the mercy of these brutes, who were no doubt watching them and would return if they saw him lying alone, and at the moment a bullet whistled past his head as if to show how closely they were being observed. In vain he suggested that the beggars would have more difficulty in hitting them if they were moving than if they stayed still. Morris was not to be persuaded. All this time Hargreaves was propping him up and trying to staunch the flow of blood from his thigh. Bullets

began to come in more frequently from the right, and Hargreaves, who was kneeling beside Morris, shielding him as much as possible from the fire, got badly hit two or three times. When our division came up—we had advanced at the double directly we heard the shots, and the whole incident could not have taken more than five minutes—Hargreaves was lying in a dead faint from loss of blood, and Morris was not much better. Morris is getting on all right; but Hargreaves's case is merely a matter of hours. He can hardly outlast the night. I had just come from him when I saw you."

"He was an odd sort of man," I said, thoughtfully. "Plenty of pluck, apparently—at least he seems to have stood by Morris well. Not much of a sportsman, though, I believe; never played polo or did much shooting. Rode well, I remember. He won that steeplechase last May on his mare Harkaway. He and Morris were rather chums, weren't they? I think I remember seeing them about together a good deal, though they hadn't much in common, I should think. Morris is rather an enthusiast over polo and shooting, and all sorts of sport. Indeed, riding must have been almost the only pursuit they had in common. A strangely assorted pair. Yet they seemed to be a good deal together."

"Oh, have you never heard about Hargreaves?" said Parker. "No? It would be a bit before your time, I suppose, and besides it's not generally known, I think. Hargreaves never mentioned it, and I didn't think it worth while to let it get known as far as I was concerned. You know Morris and I aren't on very good terms, or at least you may have noticed it. The fact is, I was rather taken with Hargreaves when he first joined. He and Morris came over together in the same ship, and struck up a friendship during the voyage. When Morris first arrived he used to be about with Hargreaves a great deal. Afterwards he went in greatly for polo and so on, and took to betting on horses, and generally going the pace."

"He has rather given that up now, hasn't he?" I asked.

"Yes, but he was a younger hand at the time I am speaking of, and hadn't learnt by experience the messes these fascinating quadrupeds land one in. Well, he got himself in a bad hole about some horse and was precious near having to sell out—in fact in a thorough mess—and Hargreaves, who was himself not a rich man, managed



to raise money and get him out of that scrape. After that he was more cautious, though he got rather a bad name for gambling and high play, unlimited loo, and rot of that kind. Hargreaves, I think, was rather annoyed at this new development of folly."

"I hardly wonder," I said, "if he had had to fork out for his friend's last escapade; but go on."

"Well, I think at last he spoke to Morris in a friendly way about it. Morris, like the rest of the world, was not overburdened with gratitude, and, of course, did not listen. About the same time I had a talk with Hargreaves myself; I knew him very well, and so could speak out pretty plainly, you know."

"Privilege of friends to say disagreeable things," I suggested.

"Quite so. I asked him whether he did not consider that he was letting his liking for Morris carry him rather far. He was getting out of the better set in the mess, who looked askance at his friend's wild doings, while he didn't care to associate with the other camp and be a rook like the rest, so that between the two he was getting left out in the cold. I asked him why he should let a friendship of that kind interfere with his chances in his profession, spoil his career, and make life miserable. He took my suggestions quite calmly. You know his quiet way of taking things—never impassioned, never, apparently, either shocked or awed, always quiet and self-possessed. He said he was much obliged to me for the interest I manifested in his welfare, temporal and spiritual—here he smiled, not exactly sarcastically, but as if the whole thing was rather amusing—and quite saw the folly of sacrificing one's profession to one's friends, as the sentimentalists recommend."

"Quite an orthodox sentiment for the occasion on which it was uttered," I said. "I didn't know Hargreaves was such a good hand at elaborating a sarcasm, though I always thought him a bit cynical."

"It was not sarcasm, I think," said Parker, "nor yet cynicism, only a sort of genial comment on my sage advice, to which, I need hardly say, he paid no attention. People never do pay any attention to advice unless it happens to coincide with their own preconceived ideas."

"Really, Parker, I never gave you credit for so keen an insight into human nature," I said.

"Well, to go on with my story. Morris

got more entirely wedded to his sporting set, and Hargreaves into a more and more awkward position, for you know he is a quiet fellow, not capable of thrusting himself into prominence, and using his influence to more or less fuse two sets together, though I think he saw that the regular split was a bad thing for the regiment. Meantime, I have a suspicion that he used to lend Morris money at intervals and so keep him going—I call it lending, though I never heard any talk of payment. At last, one day I thought the climax had come, and the spell would be broken, for it seemed to me the silliest piece of folly, and seems so still; but Morris is considerably toned down now—not such a brute as he used to be then. Well, Morris and a number of his own particular chums were sitting over their wine after the rest of the mess had gone out. I had come in a bit late, and so remained in rather late also. They were talking, as usual, of their favourite animal, and I heard a few bets taken and offered. They talked very loudly, occasionally raised their voices considerably in dispute over some water jump which Fleming's Ranter was said to have refused the previous day, while Harkaway—Hargreaves's brute—had cleared it first time. When Hargreaves's name was mentioned several of the men began to chaff Morris for being so often seen about with such a 'soft.'"

"Hideous expression!" I murmured.

"He hasn't the pluck of a mouse," said one. "Got no idea of sportsmanship in him," said another. Morris, who had said nothing at first, at last was appealed to point-blank for his reasons for tolerating his mentor. Whereupon he declared quite calmly, holding a glass of wine critically up to the light and examining its colour, that he didn't care for the fellow, but he was useful—lends me money when I'm hard up, which is more than some of you fellows would do. Of course, he's a great fool, but then a fool and his money, you know. Besides, I can't shake him off if he will fasten himself on to me. It's such a difficult thing to disengage the human limpet. He clings much more tightly than the shell-fish of that name. Besides, you wouldn't have me slay the goose that lays the golden eggs.' All this was said in quite a loud voice, so that I, who was sitting at the other end of the table, heard it quite plainly. Of course, I was furious."

"I don't doubt it," I said; "but go on.

I'm interested to know whether you threw a decanter at somebody, or merely wrung Master Morris's wretched neck."

"Well, my first inclination was to do one of those two things; but, you see, it would have led to a great row, and the whole affair would have come out. Those brutes would have been certain to make it all look as unpleasant as possible for Hargreaves, even though that led to a wiggling for Morris from the Colonel, and a general boycott of him by the mess. So I merely got up and stated that I considered Mr. Morris a beastly cad, who dared not stand up for a friend behind his back, adding that I should feel it my duty to report the whole affair to Hargreaves. Morris was anxious to fight on the spot, for, to do him justice, he is a plucky enough fellow, though a great blackguard; but the others held him back, knowing that it would lead to a row and a further black mark added to the many against their names in the Colonel's books. Just as the row was at its height, and Morris was almost beside himself with fury—he had had a good deal of wine, I think—who should appear but Hargreaves himself in person!

"The wrangle ceased on the instant. Really, the whole situation was intensely dramatic. Hargreaves was entirely calm, as he always is. After a pause, he said, smiling: 'What a row you fellows were making! I began to think you'd be stirring up the wrath of the Colonel by disturbing his after-dinner nap. I am glad my presence has acted as a sedative.' Then he went up to Morris, laid his hand on his shoulder, and said: "Come out for a stroll, George. It's a jolly night, lovely moon, almost as light as day.'

"Morris had been looking very uncomfortable ever since Hargreaves arrived. Now he began to look more and more hot and red, while Hargreaves was so entirely at his ease. The other men slunk out one by one, hoping to escape observation, for, brutes as they were, they saw the strange discrepancy between their sneers and Morris's disclaimer, and the calm, kindly way in which Hargreaves quieted Morris. He, I have no doubt, would have escaped too if he had been able; but he couldn't very well get up and go away while Hargreaves was actually speaking to him, so he continued to sit and chafe inwardly at the exceedingly awkward fix he was in, making no answer to what was said to him.

"After a pause, Hargreaves sat down near him and said, in a tone of some concern: 'What's the matter, George? Have you had a row with some of these fellows?' Here he looked at me as if asking me to go and leave them together. I, however, ignored this silent request, and when Morris still said nothing, I came up to them, and taking a seat at their end of the table, said, in an equable and unimpassioned a tone as I could summon up:

"'Morris and I had a little dispute about the nature of friendship—quite a Platonic dialogue, modelled on the Symposium.' All the time I kept my eyes fixed on Morris, watching the effect of my words, and I have never seen a man's eyes express more horror and shame than his did then. Indeed, I almost relented and decided to say no more about the particulars of the row; but Hargreaves showed such evident sympathy with Morris's discomfiture, and annoyance at my continuing to dwell on a subject which was evidently displeasing to him, that I was filled with a sort of rage at his blindness. I had thought he might gather enough of the grounds of the late row from my general statement; but he did not seem to apply the description to his own case in any way, being ignorant, perhaps, of the full extent of the jealousy of him felt by the rest of Morris's set as an interloper in their councils. Anyhow, either anger at, or pity for him, I don't quite know which, made me go on, still keeping my eyes on the wretched Morris, who sat as if chained to his seat.

"'To be more explicit,' I said, 'for I think it would be well for you to know these things from every point of view, Morris's precious friends, whom it is not necessary to actually name, took occasion to enquire of Morris why he was so often about with you—instead of with one of their precious selves, I suppose. Morris here explained the thing with admirable clearness. Firstly, he couldn't help himself, owing to your pertinacity. Secondly, he had found you useful financially in times past. Thirdly, he had not made enough out of you yet. These generous motives were, of course, cheered to the echo by the others, till, for the honour of the regiment, I felt bound to cut in.'

"Hargreaves, whose face I was watching alternately with Morris's, to see how the news affected him, withstood the charge, so to speak, admirably. He never moved a muscle of his face, merely bowed

slightly, and said he was sorry I had let my sense of duty impose on me so disagreeable a task; intimated with a faint smile that I must be his best friend, seeing that, if the proverb was worth anything, best friends were always the people who told one these sort of things; then fell into musing, leaving me with an uncomfortable feeling that I had better have left ill alone. Morris was sitting in his old position, overwhelmed with shame and bitterness. Poor fellow, I could almost pity him as he sat there. He looked absolutely suicidal.

"There was a pause of some minutes, during which nothing was to be heard but the monotonous ticking of the clock, and, as far as I was concerned, the beating of my heart. Hargreaves at last looked up, still calm and unmoved, and said quietly:

"I'm really very sorry, Morris, to have caused you this annoyance. Of course, when one is in with one set, one does not care to see much of people outside that set. At the same time, I see quite plainly how difficult it would have been for you to tell me so. Besides, people who are blind must of necessity fall into ditches sometimes, even when they have a friend to lead them. They must pay the penalty for that blindness, as I have done, and think themselves lucky if they have not, as I did, dragged a friend into the ditch after them, possibly because he was a little blind too, and one of them rash enough to try and lead the other."

"Morris said nothing, only something like a groan escaped him, charged with the misery and hopelessness, as when the loss of something the value of which we discover too late, seems to leap up and catch us by the throat.

"Then Hargreaves, turning to me, said, rising at the same time from his seat:

"I shall be obliged if you will say nothing of this to any one; let the subject drop. It is dead; let the dead bury their dead. These mistakes must occur sometimes. Thank Heaven they are on the whole rare; and if a man is so arrogant as to think he can guide another, he should at least take a fall patiently. By the way, Morris, I won't annoy you in future. When you want to see me, come and tell me; I shall always be glad to help you in any way, but I think it wiser for me not to take the initiative in future, to avoid mistakes, you know. Also I will avoid, if possible, forcing myself upon you in future, unless you ask me. It will be better so in every way. Ten o'clock? I'm afraid we shall not have time for a

walk this evening. Good night, Morris; good night, Parker.' And he went out.

"Morris turned to me after the other had left. He was quite subdued and quiet now. Once or twice he seemed about to speak; finally he, too, rose wearily and left the room."

"Quite a dramatic incident," I said, as Parker lighted a cheroot. "You in the character of disinterested friend talking in heroics, concentrated bitterness, and all the rest of it! Well, what was the dénouement of this tragedy?"

"I'm afraid the dénouement is to-day's mishap," said Parker, gravely, "and the curtain will probably fall to-night. When the hero of the play dies, the last act must be near its close, and the order to ring down will soon come. In real life it is unlikely that the chief actor will even come before the curtain. The applause is generally too scanty. Hargreaves has not much longer in this world."

"But how did things go on after your shell had burst, and done its best to separate the actors in the drama irrevocably?" I asked, curious to know how a character like Hargreaves's would stand a shock of this kind, for I am a bit of a psychologist, and am always interested in watching the effect which circumstances have on different types of mind.

"Oh, he and Morris saw very little of each other at first," said Parker. "Morris, I suppose, was too shy to take advantage of Hargreaves's invitation to come and see him as often as he liked, so their intercourse was for the time confined to desultory conversation in the mess-room or when they met. In fact, I began to think that my interference had answered its purpose, and shown Hargreaves what an ass he had been. Indeed, I went so far as to say to him once, when we were alone, that I was glad he had thrown Morris over altogether as a cowardly young brute at the best. He interposed quickly at this point, and said that I was entirely mistaken. No change had taken place in his feeling towards Morris, and he was not aware of any reason why such change should take place. I was rather disconcerted, and, I suppose, showed that I was, for he went on more kindly: 'When will you begin to think twice before putting yourself in awkward positions for the sake of your friends? They are never grateful. No one who is under an obligation to one ever is. A man to whom you have done a service always of necessity hates you

for it, and the greater the service, the more the consciousness of it galls him. You can't expect me to be more grateful than the rest of my kind, can you? Come out for a stroll; I want to go to White's about Harkaway. He went a bit lame yesterday, and I haven't much confidence in Martin's powers of getting him right for the Vase.\* After that I never spoke about the subject. Still I kept my eyes open, and I noticed that whenever they agreed to go anywhere or do anything together, it seemed to be at Morris's invitation; so he kept his word and waited to be asked, like the young ladies at a ball, as he had declared he would that evening. I remember this morning, when they went forward together to look out for Dacoits, it was at Morris's suggestion."

"Did he never betray any resentment at the affair?" I asked. "He must have the temper of an angel."

"Not that," said Parker. "In fact, I have often heard him say his temper is not at all his strong point, but he has a tremendous control over himself, and seldom shows anger. His rage is concentrated, not discursive. He can generally put it into two or three words that simply shrivel you up. The more angry he is, the more icily cold and polite he gets. No, he never showed any sign of remembering that evening except by the avoidance of actual overtures on his side, which I mentioned. Indeed, they were not necessary, for Morris gradually broke with his old set, and is never about with them now. Well, there was one other sign. He always used to call Morris by his Christian name, George, you know. I have never heard him do so since that night. Well, orderly, what is it? Any one wanting me?"

"Mr. Hargreaves is dead, sir," said the man, saluting. "He was conscious for the last half-hour before he died, and left a note to be given to Mr. Morris, sir, after his death."

"Very well, orderly," said Parker, glancing at me. "Good night, Seymour. I must go now. I'll come back in an hour or so if there's anything to tell you. Take the note to Mr. Morris, orderly, at once."

#### SIBERIA AND ITS EXILES.

TRUTH, they say, is stranger than fiction, and much as romancists have concerned themselves with the mysteries of Asiatic Russia, surely nothing they have imagined

is more moving and appalling than the facts which have been revealed. Of course, with such men as Stepniak and Kropotkin there was always the possibility of political bias in any pictures they drew; while, again, as in the case of the Rev. Dr. Henry Lansdell, there was the suspicion that the more optimistic pictures were officially inspired. No one doubts the earnestness and good faith of Dr. Lansdell, who most conscientiously described what he saw; but then he was not allowed to see the worst. He was "personally conducted," even when he was not aware of it, by Government officials directed from St. Petersburg. Mr. George Kennan, whose narrative of his remarkable experiences has been enthralling American readers for the last year or two, and has just been published in complete form in this country,\* managed somehow to see a great deal more than any previous outsider, or than he was expected to see.

He went under a sort of official ægis, because he was supposed to be in sympathy with the Russian Government, and to regard the exile system with approval—as, indeed, he did until he began to really understand it. Then, without risking his official advantages, he set about observing and recording on his own account what he would never have been allowed to learn if his change of view had been anticipated.

It was in May, 1885, that, accompanied by Mr. George Frost, an artist, he reached St. Petersburg in order to begin a tour of Siberia, in which country he had previously resided for some two years in connection with telegraph work. His credentials assured him a hearty reception in the capital, and he was provided by the Minister of the Interior with an order which opened to him all the prisons he might want to visit. The preliminaries completed, he took rail to the famous fair-city of Nizhni Novgorod, whence by steamer down the Volga and up its affluent, the Kama, he reached Perm, then the terminus of the Ural Mountains Railway.

As to the Volga, he takes a thoroughly practical view, and sets forth the things which struck him as illustrating the "greatness"—that is, the bigness—of the country. It will not be a revelation for

\* "Siberia and the Exile System." By George Kennan. James R. Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., 2 vols., profusely illustrated.



Americans alone to learn that this magnificent waterway is as much the creator of Eastern Russia as the Nile is the creator of Egypt. Upon it and the produce of its basin depend, directly and indirectly, the welfare and prosperity of ten millions of people. It is one of the greatest rivers of the world, measuring from source to mouth, in the Caspian Sea, some two thousand three hundred miles, washing the borders of nine provinces, and sweeping past thirty-nine cities, and more than a thousand minor towns and villages. The shipping of this mighty river centres at Nizhni Novgorod, where are six or eight miles of quayage, and a Court of Shipping, with an administrative bureau and large staff. The number of steamers plying on the Volga exceeds those on the busy Mississippi, while of vessels of all kinds some seven thousand are constantly employed bringing down about five million tons of merchandise annually. These facts and figures will cause a shock of surprise to those people who have been accustomed to think of Russia as a semi-pastoral, semi-barbarous country, with a sparsely scattered population, and a rudimentary system of commerce. The scenery, too, of this marvellous river is varied and picturesque, and, in the early summer, a steamer voyage upon its waters is a prolonged enjoyment.

Perm is a city of thirty-two thousand inhabitants on the boundary-line of European Russia, through which passes practically the whole of the vast mass of Siberian commerce. From Perm the railway runs to Ekaterinburg through fine mountainous scenery. Leaving Perm, the traveller quits Europe, but does not yet enter Siberia. There is an intervening district which seems neither Europe nor Asia. Even at Ekaterinburg, which is in Asia, there is a distance of about one hundred miles to be traversed before Siberia proper is reached.

Ekaterinburg is the centre of a great mining district—of gold, platinum, copper, and precious stones, besides iron, coal, and salt—and is a busy and enterprising place.

The railway from Ekaterinburg, eastwards, is now completed to Tiumen, the Siberian town with the first forwarding-prison, but when Mr. Kennan went he had to traverse the distance of two hundred miles in the large heavy carriages of the country, called "tarantas." Immediately after leaving Ekaterinburg the traveller enters upon the Great Siberian Road,

which stretches right across Asia from the Ural Mountains to the Amur River, a distance of over three thousand miles.

But that Siberia is not a land of desolation is quickly learned. Within two hours the eastward-bound travellers passed five hundred and thirty-eight heavily laden waggons, piled high with Siberian products for the European markets, and in the first day no fewer than one thousand four hundred and forty-five waggons were counted.

On the second day after leaving Ekaterinburg is reached the Siberian boundary-post, a square pillar ten or twelve feet high, of stuccoed brick, bearing on one side the coat-of-arms of the European province of Perm, and on the other that of the Asiatic province of Tobolsk.

"No other post between St. Petersburg and the Pacific," writes Mr. Kennan, "is more full of painful suggestions, and none has for the traveller a more melancholy interest than the little opening in the forest where stands this grief-consecrated pillar. Here hundreds of thousands of exiled human beings—men, women, and children, princes, nobles, and peasants—have bidden good-bye for ever to friends, country, and home. Here, standing beside the square white boundary-post, they have, for the last time, looked backward with love and grief at their native land, and then, with tear-blurred eyes and heavy hearts, they have marched away into Siberia, to meet the unknown hardships and privations of a new life. No other boundary-post in the world has witnessed so much human suffering, or been passed by such a multitude of heart-broken people. More than one hundred and seventy thousand exiles have travelled this road since 1878, and more than half a million since the beginning of the present century. In former years, when exiles were compelled to walk from the places of their arrest to the places of their banishment, they reached the Siberian boundary-post only after months of toilsome marching along muddy or dusty roads, over forest-clad mountains, through rain-storms or snow-storms, or in bitter cold. As the boundary-post is situated about half-way between the last European and the first Siberian "étape," it has always been customary to allow exile parties to stop here for rest and for a last good-bye to home and country. The Russian peasant, even when a criminal, is deeply attached to his native land, and heart-rending scenes have been witnessed

around the boundary-pillar, when such a party, overtaken perhaps by frost and snow in the early autumn, stopped here for a last farewell. Some gave way to unrestrained grief; some comforted the weeping; some knelt and pressed their faces to the loved soil of their native country, and collected a little earth to take with them into exile; and a few pressed their lips to the European side of the cold brick pillar, as if bidding good-bye for ever to all that it symbolised."

Siberia is not the semi-arctic, barren province which it has usually appeared to the popular imagination, nor is its population composed only of exiles, soldiers, officials, and some half-wild aborigines. It is really a continent in itself, with many diversities of climate, scenery, and vegetation.

It is a continent stretching over thirty-seven degrees or two thousand five hundred miles of latitude, and one hundred and thirty degrees or five thousand miles of longitude. It could take in the whole area of the United States from Maine to California, and from Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico, and still have room for the greater part of Europe besides. Of course a land of such extent must have great diversity of climate as well as of scenery and physical characteristics. There is, for instance, the great northern belt of tundras, or frozen steppes, extending along the Arctic sea-coast from Novaya Zemlaya to Behring's Straits. Then there is the forest region, a belt which stretches across the middle of the continent from the Ural Mountains to the Sea of Okhotsk. And then there is the fertile region, which extends from Ekaterinburg to the Pacific along the frontiers of the Central Asian Khanates and of Mongolia.

The first is undoubtedly one of the most barren and inhospitable regions in the world—a land of desolate steppes, which in summer are trackless wastes of brown wet moss, and in winter are trackless deserts of snow, which, driven before the wind, packs into long, hard waves. Beneath the summer moss is a thick stratum of eternal frost, extending in places to a depth of hundreds of feet. Besides the spongy moss there is hardly any vegetation, and the climate is probably the most severe in the world. In the forest belt to the south, however, you may travel for weeks together through a continuous forest.

The climate ranges from a tolerably severe one along the northern boundary

to a mild and genial one towards the south, where the poplar takes the place of the fir, and the elm that of the larch. The third section, the fertile belt, is a beautiful and picturesque country, with a soil as fertile as that of an English garden, where flowers grow everywhere in the greatest profusion, and where there is a fine mingling of plain and mountain. The winter there is cold, but the summer is magnificent—warmer and more genial than that of Central Europe. Here tobacco is grown; melons are a profitable crop, and the wheat harvests average fifty million bushels per annum. The summer temperature of this country averages six degrees more than the mean summer temperature of Europe. Nothing surprises the traveller more than the fervent heat of Siberian sunshine, and the beauty and profusion of Siberian flowers.

Through such a country the exiles pass from Ekaterinburg to the forwarding-prison of Tiumen. For miles the road runs beneath an avenue of silver birches, planted by order of the Empress Catherine the Second, and to this day known as "Catherine's Alley." Many a hot and weary traveller has blessed her memory as he found shelter from the fierce rays of the summer sun. There are no fences and no farmhouses. The land belongs to the Crown, and the village commune have only the usufruct of it. They cultivate in common or by periodical division of allotments among themselves. Thus the population gathers in villages, and the country is unbroken by farmsteads. The villages, too, are shabby in appearance dirty.

Before reaching Tiumen, the road leaves the beautiful farm country, and passes through a swampy tract of forest. The town itself is built upon a marshy plain. It is a place of some one thousand nine hundred inhabitants, about one thousand seven hundred miles east from St. Petersburg, and has often enough been described by travellers. The interest in the present case is that it contains the most important exile forwarding-prison in Siberia, and also the Chief Bureau of Exile Administration. Through Tiumen must pass all persons condemned to banishment, colonisation, or penal servitude, and at Tiumen are kept all the records and statistics of the exile system.

These records go back to 1648. When will they end?

From these records it is seen that between 1823 and 1887, seven hundred and

seventy-two thousand nine hundred and seventy-nine exiles were sent to Siberia in four distinct classes. These are: (1) hard labour convicts; (2) penal colonists; (3) persons simply banished, whether by sentence of court, order of the village communes to which they belonged, or edict of the Minister of the Interior; and (4) women and children who were exiled voluntarily with their husbands or parents.

The first two classes comprise criminals, who are deprived of all civil rights, and who must remain in Siberia for life. Those in the third class are not necessarily criminals, and may return to Russia at the expiration of their term of banishment. These "simple exiles" wear no fetters and are not branded; but the convicts and penal colonists have their heads half-shaved, and must march from the railway terminus to their places of destination shackled with leg-fetters weighing five pounds.

An analysis of the figures for 1885, the year in which Mr. Kennan was in Siberia, is very interesting. In that year fifteen thousand seven hundred and sixty-six exiles passed through the Tiumen bureau, namely, eleven thousand six hundred and eighty-seven males, and four thousand and seventy-nine females. No fewer than five thousand five hundred and thirty-six, that is to say, about one-third, were voluntary exiles, accompanying or following their relatives. The next highest proportion was that coming under the category "exiled by village communes," the number being three thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight. It is to be explained that each village commune in Russia has the right to banish any of its members who render themselves objectionable to the rest; no trial is required, but merely a resolution of the commune. Indeed, of all the ten thousand two hundred and thirty involuntary exiles, it was seen that only four thousand three hundred and ninety-two had any trial or form of trial, and were banished by sentence of court.

No fewer than five thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight were exiled by what is called "administrative process," that is to say, an order from the Minister of the Interior; but of these, three thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight were sent, not by the Government initiative—for, of course, the Minister has to sign all the decrees—but by village communes.

It is difficult to say what proportion of the exiles are political offenders. They

are not ranked apart, but are distributed among all the classes, for reasons which, perhaps, need not be explained. Mr. Kennan, however, gathered that from 1879 to 1884, seven hundred and forty-nine undoubtedly political offenders were banished by "administrative process." That is an average of one hundred and twenty-five per annum, and it is assumed that at least twenty-five per annum may be added from among those sent as penal colonists, so that the number of political exiles is probably about one per cent. of the whole. This does not include the Poles, about one hundred thousand of whom, besides thousands of "political conspirators," were banished prior to 1879.

All exiles are now taken by train to Tiumen, where they remain about a fortnight before being forwarded to their ultimate destinations. The prison at Tiumen is chronically overcrowded, and, as seen by Mr. Kennan, in a frightfully insanitary condition. It is a rectangular, three-storeyed building, within a large yard completely commanded by the sentry-boxes along the enclosing wall. It was built to accommodate eight hundred and fifty prisoners; there were one thousand seven hundred and forty-one in its cells when visited by our travellers. The exiles are all clothed alike in a costume of grey, and the air resounds with the clanking of chains.

Mr. Kennan describes minutely the first cell visited, and adds:

"There was practically no ventilation whatever, and the air was so poisoned and foul that I could hardly force myself to breathe it. We visited successively in the yard six "kammers," or cells, essentially like the first, and found in every one of them three or four times the number of prisoners for which it was intended, and five or six times the number for which it had adequate air space. In most of the cells there was not room enough on the sleeping-platforms for all of the convicts, and scores of men slept every night on the foul, muddy floors under the "nari"—sleeping-platform—and in the gangways between it and the walls. Three or four pale, dejected, and apparently sick prisoners, crawled from under the sleeping-platform in one of the cells as we entered."

In one of the cells "were eight or ten 'dvoryane' or nobles, who seemed to be educated men, and in whose presence the warden removed his hat. Whether any of them were 'politicals' or not I do not

know, but in this part of the prison the politicals were usually confined. The air in the corridors and cells, particularly in the second storey, was indescribably and unimaginably foul. Every cubic foot of it had apparently been respired over and over again until it did not contain an atom of oxygen; it was laden with fever germs from the unventilated hospital wards, fetid odours from diseased human lungs and unclean human bodies, and the stench arising from unemptied excrement buckets at the ends of the corridors. I breathed as little as I possibly could, but every respiration seemed to pollute me to the very soul, and I became faint from nausea and lack of oxygen. It was like trying to breathe in an underground hospital drain."

Bad as was the condition at Tiumen, it was even worse at Tomsk, the forwarding-prison of which was visited later. Here were found three thousand prisoners crammed into a space designed for one thousand one hundred, and the number of arrivals ranged from five hundred to eight hundred per week, while the arrangements for despatch eastward could not forward more than four hundred per week. The medical officer in charge said that he had recommended that the buildings should be razed to the ground, as saturated with contagious diseases, but that nothing had been done beyond calling for plans and reports.

From Tiumen the prisoners are forwarded to Tomsk in convict barges—at least, those intended for Eastern Siberia. The voyage occupies from seven to ten days, and over ten thousand exiles are transported in these vessels every year. The barges are large vessels of two hundred and twenty feet or so in length, with all the space between the deck-houses roofed over and enclosed in a sort of iron cage, which is divided into compartments for the men and women respectively. The sleeping cabins are below, and are on the plan of the cells in the Tiumen prison, but, of course, are not so overcrowded. The vessel also is cleaned and disinfected after every voyage. It is a huge floating prison, but must afford a pleasant change to the poor wretches from the horrors of Tiumen.

Mr. Kennan first met with genuine "political" exiles at Semipalatinsk, a town of fifteen thousand inhabitants, on the River Irtysh, about nine hundred miles from Tiumen, and a place of considerable commercial importance, as being the only caravan route to Central Asia. He says:

"I find it extremely difficult now, after a whole year of intimate association with political exiles, to recall the impressions that I had of them before I made the acquaintance of the exile colony in Semipalatinsk. I know that I was prejudiced against them, and that I expected them to be wholly unlike the rational, cultivated men and women one meets in civilised society; but I cannot by any exercise of will bring back the unreal and fantastic conception of them that I had when I crossed the Siberian frontier. As nearly as I can now remember, I regarded the people, whom I called Nihilists, as sullen and more or less incomprehensible 'cranks,' with some education, a great deal of fanatical courage, and a limitless capacity for self-sacrifice, but with the most visionary ideas of government and social organisation, and only the faintest trace of what an American would call hard common-sense. I did not expect to have more ideas in common with them than I should have with an anarchist like Louis Lingg; and although I intended to give their case against the Government a fair hearing, I believed that the result would be a confirmation of the judgement I had already formed."

And what was his experience?

"I found them to be bright, intelligent, well-informed men and women, with warm affections, quick sympathies, generous impulses, and high standards of honour and duty. They are men and women who, under other circumstances, might render valuable services to their country. If, instead of thus serving their country they are living in exile, it is not because they are lacking in the virtue and patriotism that are essential to good citizenship, but because the Government, which assumes the right to think and act for the Russian people, is out of harmony with the spirit of the times."

The political exiles, so long as they conform to the police regulations, and do not exhibit a spirit of insubordination, are allowed a considerable amount of personal liberty. They are restricted to certain towns or districts, but may follow their own occupations and have their families about them. If they incur the resentment of any official, however, they are liable to be deported, as refractory, to some of the dreary death-in-life settlements of the frozen region. Some extremely interesting reminiscences of famous political exiles are given by Mr. Kennan, as well as stories of some remarkable escapes, which,



however, we have not space to dwell upon.

Bad as the fate of the exiles is in the forwarding prisons, in which they are all compelled temporarily to reside, it is even worse in the case of those who have to make long marches in the intense cold of winter, or the fierce heat of summer, to the mines or other avenues of convict labour. Their sufferings are indescribable, but it is a relief to know that a plan was on foot, and has—let us hope—now been adopted, for transporting them in future in waggons, and in the summer-time only.

Those who are condemned to the mines are indeed to be pitied, and a harrowing account is given of their lives and punishments. Perhaps it may be held that they are not worse off than the prisoners in convict establishments in other countries, and that it is needless to waste our sympathies upon brutal criminals. Yes; but political exiles—persons of education and gentle nurture—are also sometimes condemned to these dreadful establishments.

The sum of the whole matter is that the Siberian exile system, even in its most favourable aspects—and no doubt its evils have been often exaggerated—is a horror, as well as a heavy burden upon Siberia itself. The country is, save in the frozen north, rich in natural resources, but it is crushed under the influx of criminals and the pressure of penal establishments. Mr. Kennan longs for the abolition of the system, but believes that it will long remain, as it is, one of the darkest blot on the civilisation of the nineteenth century.

#### CONCERNING HATS.

THERE is much philosophy, as everybody knows, or should know, in the wearing of hats. When a man is meditating a sonnet, or is distraught with sorrow, he pulls his hat, like Ross in Shakespeare's "Macbeth," upon his brows, and goes gloomily to and fro with its shadow on his face. On the other hand, in moments of imprudent elation, he tilts it over the back of his head; though it is true that this attitude is sometimes adopted by statesmen, and political economists, and great tragedians, as matter of use and wont. When of a martial disposition, he carries it at so aggressive an angle that the looker-on stands breathless with surprise that it is not dislodged from its pride of place by

the slightest impulse. The smart young man of London town wears it habitually perched over his left ear—"all on one side, like Gourcock," as the Glasgowian Scots are fond of saying.

But the fact is, every man wears his hat—if he has one to wear—after a manner of his own, which serves to indicate the leading traits of his character to the student of humanity. The difference, for example, between the idiosyncrasy of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Salisbury, or between that of the Duke of Argyll and Professor Huxley, is plainly revealed by the way in which they wear their beavers up, and by the shape, size, and style of the beavers. Of course, the maxim I have laid down requires some modification in the case of bishops, deans, and archdeacons, whose headgear and the mode of wearing it are controlled by fundamental laws and ecclesiastical traditions, with which the security of the Church of England is understood to be bound up. The same may be said of the military, whose hats or caps, and the wearing of them, are prescribed, I suppose, by the Articles of War or Her Majesty's Regulations. Some allowance must also be made for class influence. For example, the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange exhibit a kind of perkiness which is quite foreign to the habit of the gentlemen of the Inns of Court. So, too, the bucolic population wear their hats after a fashion that is distinctly bucolic. Take your ploughman and clap upon him a Lincoln and Bennett, and Hodge will still stand revealed as Hodge. Yet I revert to my original proposition, and contend that after due allowance has been made for external influences, professional and conventional, it is true that a man is known by his hat. I remember to have heard of an absconding offender who was "spotted" by the detective in search of him from the style in which he "sport" his "beaver." In all other respects he had contrived to get rid of his personal identity; but "the fashion of his hat" betrayed him.

"Is his head worth a hat?" enquires Rosalind—a question which implies that hats are exceptionally valuable in the sense which I have pointed out. Really, there seems to be room for the foundation and development of a new science, to be called petasiology, or the science of hats. This would include the study of the individuality of hats; the harmony that exists, or ought to exist, between the hat and the other

parts of the human costume; the extent to which the hat has or might become an expression of thought or feeling; the best shape of the hat from a moral and intellectual point of view; the propriety of reserving certain styles to certain classes; and the desirability of introducing an international hat which might be accepted by all civilised peoples. If an association were formed for the promotion of this science, one of its first duties would be to collect authentic particulars of the hats of great men—as, let us say, the hat which Mr. Micawber wore on his departure from *Hungerford Stairs*: “a straw hat, with a very low crown, pitched or caulked on the outside;” or that which covered the head of Mr. Joseph Sedley when he made his appearance at the Opera, “laboriously attired in tights and a cocked hat;” or that which Mark Tapley waved “on the top of his stick,” as he bade farewell to “*The Dragon*” and its tight, plump, buxom, bright-eyed, dimple-faced landlady; or that which Gabriel Oak wore—“a low-crowned felt hat, spread out at the base by tight jamming upon the head for security in high winds,” when he first saw Bathsheba Everdene; or that which Humphrey Clinker carried on the memorable occasion of his riding as postillion before Miss Tabitha Bramble.

The hats of some other great personages would repay investigation, such as Sir Walter Raleigh's, with its loops of precious stones; the brilliant Buckingham's; Charles the First's, as Vandyck has painted it; Dr. Johnson's; Napoleon's *petit gris* chapeau; Wellington's, which he wore at Waterloo. It might even be possible to recover some data respecting that “dress hat” which Ryder, afterwards Earl of Harrowby, brought down with him from London to Wilberforce's house at Wimbledon, and which Pitt surreptitiously cut into fragments, carefully sowing them in Wilberforce's garden beds; or respecting that jaunty-looking hat which Lord Palmerston delighted in, as you may see in Punch's old cartoons. But the enquiry I speak of is too extensive to be more than glanced at in these pages.

The history of the hat has its points of interest. Like the history of man himself, it goes back into an antiquity which has bequeathed us no authentic records. Apparently the world's grey forefathers went to and fro with heads uncovered. When the climate deteriorated, or they grew more liable to catarrh, rheumatism, and

neuralgia, they wrapped themselves up in the folds of their robes or mantles. There would be an inconvenience about this proceeding which would probably lead to the invention of the *tzaniph*, or turban, which was evidently suggested by the folds of the robes. The Hebrew writers speak also of a *peér*; but what this may have been nobody exactly knows. Perhaps it was an ornamental turban to be worn by Solomon the King on high days and holidays; or, as the modern turban still consists of two parts—the *kaook*, or stiff, cylindrical, central cap, which rises aloft with imposing dignity, and the *shaash*, or muslin folds coiled around the *kaook*—these two parts may answer to the ancient *tzaniph* and *peér*. Anyway, the turban is, and has always been, a picturesque and impressive head-dress, which one associates with the “*Arabian Nights*,” Harun Al Raschid, Mahmud the Great, and the tales of the *genii*. The modern *fez* is but a sorry substitute.

At first the Greeks, like the Orientals, went bareheaded; but at some unknown epoch they also took to protective head-gear, and evolved a couple of types—the *pileus*, a round, close-fitting skull-cap, and the *petasus*, a big, roomy hat, with a broad brim, which averted Sol's too ardent rays from the brow and eyes. These were the progenitors of the headgear of the modern Europeans, which belongs to two distinct classes—the brimmy cap or bonnet, and the brimless hat. The latter, as we know it, is descended from the Puritan hat—the “steeple-crowned hat, with broad, shadowy brim,” which Sir Walter Scott describes; which the Pilgrim Fathers carried across the Atlantic; which was brought back to France in the days of Benjamin Franklin, assumed by the gilded youth of Paris in their philo-Americanism, and adapted by French ingenuity into the well-known “stove-pipe” hat, which, all the world over, is recognised as the symbol of civilisation, together with rum and the Bible. The Greek *petasus* and *pileus* were made of felt; and felt continued to be the material used until, early in the present century, silk was introduced by the French hat manufacturers.

Felted hats came into England about the same time as William and his Normans. We read, however, that Edward the Confessor covered his not too sagacious head with one which closely resembled in size and shape “the bonnet” worn by the

Lowland Scotch. Civilians and priests wore a hood, and, in travelling, a furred cap. The merchant, among Chaucer's "Canterbury Pilgrims," wore "on his hed a Flaundrish bever hat." Before the great naval battle of "L'Espagnolo sur Mer," in 1350, Edward the Third sat in the bows of his ship, attired in a black velvet jacket, with "a small beaver hat of the same colour, which became him well." Beaver hats, varying continually in size and shape, continued to be used in England for the next four centuries. In the middle of the fifteenth century a hat cost one shilling—equal, at the present value of money, to twelve or thirteen shillings. The gentles imported theirs at a much dearer rate, until the importation was prohibited by Act of Parliament. This reminds me of a statute of Edward the Fourth, directed against the introduction of machinery into the home hat-trade: "It is showed in the said parliament," we read, "how that hats, bonnets, and caps, as well single as double, were wont to be faithfully made, wrought, fulled, and thicked by man's strength—that is to say, with hands and feet, and thereby the makers of the same have honestly before this time gained their living, and kept many apprentices, servants, and good houses, till now of late that by subtle imagination, to the destruction of the labours and sustenance of many men, such hats, bonnets, and caps have been fulled and thicked in fulling-mills, and in the said mills the hats and caps be broken and deceitfully wrought."

This is the earliest example I know, in English records, of that jealousy of machinery which ignorance of the true interest of labour has so often cherished; and that the jealousy should exhibit itself in regard to the hat is another grave testimony to the importance of our subject.

In Lord Lytton's "Last of the Barons," some allusions occur to the headgear of fifteenth-century England. The gay young Neville, who plays so important a part in the story, wears, on gaudy occasions, "a velvet cap, turned up at the side, and extending in a point over the forehead." The London 'prentices wore their caps "on one side," a habit which, as I have hinted, has descended to their present representatives. We read, too, of Warwick's "plumed cap"; of Clarence's "high and tiara-like" hat or cap, with its single plume of white, like Henry of Navarre's in Macaulay's famous ballad; and of Robin of Redesdale's cap,

"somewhat like a turban," which "fell in two ends over the left cheek till they touched the shoulder," while "the upper part of the visage was concealed by a half-visard, not unfrequently worn out of doors with such headgear as a shade from the sun." As the wealth of the country increased, and with it the taste for luxury, the cap became a thing of beauty. We know, from Holbein's pictures, that Henry the Eighth and his nobles displayed themselves in broad-brimmed hats or caps with exceptionally broad brims, shining with jewels and feathers. Cavendish records how King Henry would visit Cardinal Wolsey "in a garment like a shepherd's, made of fine cloth-of-gold and fine crimson satin, with a cap of the same."

The hat proper—that is, the raised hat—was first made in England by Spanish hatters about 1510, having been introduced into France a century earlier. The gay young courtiers of the Queen—Elizabeth of immortal memory—shone resplendent in high-crowned hats of rare device, which, like the brilliant Raleigh, they hung round with strings of pearls. Kingsley describes his Elizabethan adventurer, John Oxenham, as having on his head "a broad velvet Spanish hat," and Master Frank Leigh as shading his delicate complexion from the sun with "a broad dove-coloured Spanish hat, with feather to match, looped up over the right ear with a pearl brooch." But hats or caps were worn according to taste or circumstances; and Scott tells us that when Leicester rode bareheaded at Elizabeth's side on her entry into Kenilworth, his esquire had charge of his lordship's black velvet bonnet, garnished with a clasp of diamonds, and surmounted by a white plume.

By a statute of 1566, velvet hats or caps were prohibited to all persons under the degree of a knight; and by another, enacted in 1571, every person, except ladies, lords, knights, and gentlemen having twenty marks a year in landed estate, was required to wear on Sundays and holidays, a home-made cap of wool, very decent and comely for all states and degrees. But these sumptuary laws were openly disregarded. Stubbs, in his "Anatomy of Abuse," describes a pleasing variety of new-fashioned headgear—hats perking up like the spear or shaft of a temple; hats flat and broad on the crown, like the battlements of a house; and round crowns with bands of every colour. This variety of shape consorted with an equal variety of

material—silk, velvet, taffety, sarsenet, wool, and “a fine hair, which they call beaver, fetched from beyond the seas.” Whoso had not hat of velvet or hat of taffeta was held of no account among the gilded youth of the time; and so common a thing was this ostentation in the matter of head-covering, that “every serving-man, countryman, or other, even all indifferently, did wear of these hats.”

James the First had no leaning this way. He wore a plain high hat, low in the nap, but turned up considerably on the right side, and fastened with a kind of aigrette. When a newly imported Spanish hat was brought to him on one occasion, he refused to wear it, remarking that he liked neither the Spaniards nor their fashions. The nobles and courtiers, however, took their own way, and very splendid were the chapeaux which they set upon their perfumed locks. Thus, Arthur Wilson says of the “white beaver hat” of Carr, Lord Carlisle, that it was “brimful of embroidery, both above and below.” And the hats worn by the splendid Villiers were in keeping with the general gorgeousness of his attire. They sparkled with diamond hat-bands and cockades, and the feather was also stuck all over diamonds. Rich, Earl of Holland, was scarcely inferior in brilliancy. When Puritanism became a power in the land, its professors abandoned all this personal frippery and foppery, and prided themselves on the plainness of their clothes and their unadorned steeple-crowned hats; wherefore the Cavaliers, by way of contrast, adopted the wide-plumed caps, the slashed doublets, and flowing mantles, which look so picturesque in the portraits of the time. With the Restoration came in the low-crowned and wide-brimmed hat of the Parisian type, with the stiff periwig and embroidered surtout.

Minutely to trace the developement of the hat down to our own time is not within my province. We are all of us familiar with the three-cornered hat of the Georgian type, which the beaux wore with so killing a grace, as we gather from the delightful pages of Smollett, and Sterne, and Fielding, and from the old Georgian comedies, in which the man of fashion carries his hat under his arm when he exchanges banter with Lady Sparkle, or presses it over his heart as a token of fervent attachment when on his knees to Miss Belinda True-love. It was just such a hat which figured in Goldsmith’s memorable contention with Johnson, at bookseller Dilly’s dinner-table

in the Poultry. The great moralist—as it is the fashion to call him—had enjoyed, according to custom, the lion’s share of the conversation; and Goldsmith, finding himself excluded from it, had taken up his hat to go away, but lingered with it in his hand for some minutes. Once he began to speak, but was overwhelmed by the loud voice of Johnson, who, at the opposite end of the table, did not perceive his attempt. “Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of the company,” says Boswell, “Goldsmith, in a passion, threw down his hat, looking angrily at Johnson, and exclaiming in a bitter tone: ‘Take it.’” Which reminds one of the hat with the white feather which Moses wears in Goldsmith’s “Vicar of Wakefield”; of Uncle Toby’s hat in “Tristram Shandy”; and of the infinite variety of hats in Hogarth’s pictures, and in Rowlandson’s and Gilray’s caricatures, and, later, in the drawings of Cruikshank and Hablot Browne.

Had I space, I might dilate on the revival of the top hat, or hat proper, in the early years of the present century, when it rose, if I may say so, to the top of the poll—on the laced hat and the broad-leaved hat; on the cocked hat, which adorns the heads of field-marshal and beadle; on the crush hat; on the varieties of low-crowned hats now worn by all classes; on the ploughman’s hat; on the policeman’s hat—a wondrous structure!—or on the sportsman’s hat. I might discourse upon the helmet or casque, which is, of course, nothing but a developement of the hat or cap, and call up all the bright associations of chivalry—all the shifting panorama of that strange mediæval romance, which, in the pages of Froissart and the old chroniclers, conceals the dark realism of the time. But everything must come to an end—magazine articles as well as hats, which, to tell truth, are of a somewhat fugitive nature, and soon lose their gloss of newness and daintiness of aspect. Let me, however, assert in concluding—the preacher’s principal assertion is generally left for his peroration—that the wearing of the hat is as much a sign of the individual as “the wearing of the green” is supposed to be of national independence. The social democrat keeps his hat on in the presence of his better as an affirmation of “the rights of man” and the principle of equality. The gentleman removes his hat in a lady’s presence; it is a token that he waives his independence as a matter of



courtesy. Shouting crowds bare their heads in welcome to King, Kaiser, or hero, whose superiority they thus tacitly acknowledge. In certain crises to put on your hat is an expression of fixed resolution; to take it off is an admission of defeat. This is a line of thought, which, if carefully followed up, would lead no doubt to valuable results, and I recommend the consideration of it to the professors of petasiology, when that new science gets fairly started. They, too, may take into consideration the relation of the hat to the head in size and shape—an important subject which has recently engaged the attention of a great Parisian hatter—and determine if any and what light may thus be thrown on the science of phrenology, and whether a famous statesman is to be known by the dimensions of his hat, as a member of the Society of Friends is by his "broad brim," and an Archbishop by his "shovel!"

## LITTLE WHITE-CAP.

A STORY IN NINE CHAPTERS.

BY BARBARA DEMPSTER.

Author of "*Mrs. Dacre's Lady-Help*," "*The Bridge House*," "*Tabitha's Choice*," etc., etc.

### CHAPTER VI.

MRS. JOLIFFE had been seriously unwell since the day of the Vicarage At Home. It was for that reason only that she had not received Mrs. Gay. She knew nothing of what had happened. That past was a sealed book between Priscilla and her aunt. The utter want of sympathy which her aunt had shown for her during that brief period in which she had gone through the greatest happiness, and the greatest shame and agony of her life, had made all interchange of thought on the subject impossible to Priscilla. She knew that her aunt had acted as she believed to be right—nay, as was right, under the circumstances. But she could not forget how her aunt had hated and despised the man who had been the cause of the intolerable pain and humiliation which had fallen upon her, nor rid herself of the suspicion that Mrs. Joliffe had even been glad to separate them. It was this suspicion that hardened her heart against her aunt whenever she thought of the past, and made it impossible ever to speak of it to one who, indirectly, at any rate, had brought so great a sorrow into her life.

When she left the Vicarage that night,

her heart, smarting and aching with the awakened pain of the past, humiliated by the shame cast on her by Mrs. Dacre's speech, with the unreasonable inconsistency of anguish, turned cold and hard as a stone.

After all, the truth must come out. The only wonder was that it had been so long hidden. From that afternoon when Mrs. Dacre had called, she knew that it could be kept secret no longer. She had seen that Mrs. Dacre suspected something—how much she did not know. Her aunt would soon know from all the country-side what had happened, and there was no need for her to speak of it. Mr. Long drove home to the Mill House with her, and saw her safely indoors. Even in the proud, hard mood, which made her talk to Mr. Long as if nothing had happened, she was vaguely conscious of that faint change which had come into the manner of the man whose identity she had only that evening discovered. But the mystery of his life, the curious fact of his acquaintance with her aunt, the natural shrinking that a reckless, degraded life inspires in a pure woman's, made her resent, instead of feeling grateful for, the veiled pity in his voice and manner.

Mr. Long himself, deadened as were all his finer perceptions by the life he had led, noticed her feeling towards him, and was too astute a man of the world to force his sympathy on her. He left her at the Mill House, and drove back to the village inn, plunged in deep thought.

"It was a pity," he came to the conclusion, as he reached his destination. "But it is an awkward matter."

It was such an awkward matter that Mr. Long found it necessary to partake rather freely of the brandy bottle he kept in his room, "for fear of an attack of the heart in the night," he explained to the landlord, and the difficulty of the matter still perplexing him, he spent most of the next day trying to clear up the affair with a prolonged course of the same treatment. The result was, that in the evening he was incapable of thinking at all, and having thus broken down the barrier he had tried to set up against this habit of self-indulgence, he pursued the same reckless course for a day or two, having only the sense to keep himself shut up in his room at the inn, out of public notice, there being one person of whom he stood genuinely in awe—Mrs. Joliffe, of the Mill House.

At the end of that period he returned to some of his right senses, and, making a violent effort to pull himself mentally and physically together, remembered the subject which had worried his lucid moments at the beginning of this fresh bout of self-indulgence.

The first most sensible thought he had was a recollection of Priscilla's eyes when he had gone to offer her his protection at the Vicarage. As they seemed to look at him through the fumes of the week's degradation and self-indulgence, he had a vague idea that they had haunted and tortured him all through the week.

"Confound the girl's eyes. They seem to go through a fellow like a sword," he said, as he struggled to bring himself into a fit frame of mind to call on Mrs. Joliffe, while a very poignant fear lest his week's conduct should have proved the last straw to her cold patience, and lead her to carry out her threat of assisting him no more, unnerved him still further.

As he walked to the Mill House now, and thought how very necessary this "niggardly allowance," as he called it, was to his comfort, the recollection of even that dazed, piteous look in Priscilla's eyes faded.

"Catherine is such a religious sort," he said, with a sardonic smile, "that she'd cut me off with a shilling if I—No; matters had best stand as they are. If I moved in them, it would only tend to make my affairs precarious as a house of cards, at the best, about my ears. And, after all, the girl's young, and will get over it, if only those gossips would leave her alone!"

He had quite recovered his sense of the fitness of things, as they concerned his own life, when he reached the Mill House. It was the afternoon that Captain Dacre had gone to look for Priscilla. He was ushered into the darkening sitting-room, where, as usual, Mrs. Joliffe sat by the fire. He shuddered as he glanced at the little round table with its contents of physical and mental refreshing. She looked at him with cold, uncompromising eyes as he advanced to the fireplace.

But it took much to disturb the equanimity of Mr. Long.

"Sorry I haven't been able to look in before this week," he said, carelessly; "but I've had one of my bad attacks of the heart again. 'Pon my word, they will carry me off one day."

But Mrs. Joliffe's set, stern face did not relax.

"Do not bring any of your lies to me, Arthur. You know that I know."

He laughed, in no ways discomfited.

"You are as charitable as the rest of the world, Catherine. It's wonderful what an amount of venom you good and respectable people can squeeze out of your lives for us poor sinners."

But her rigid sense of her duty to herself and her fellow-creatures kept her silent under the taunt. Besides, she was sick of threatening him—this reckless, hardened, wretched sinner; this degraded member of the proud family, which had cast her and her younger brother, Priscilla's father, off for the unpardonable crime of merely marrying beneath them. Beneath them! She looked at the man before her, and wondered bitterly whose lives would have weighed the truest in the scales of the Eternal Justice: those of her miller husband and her brother's wife—the penniless nursery-governess—or this of the descendant of a long line of ancestors, who had had every advantage birth and position could give him, and who had yet sunk to this? For Mr. Long was of her own flesh and blood—a first cousin, who had long ago wearied out the rest of the family, and who, trading on the fact that there had once been a strong liking between them, before she had made her unfortunate marriage, had kept up the connection between them, which acquaintanceship had been all to his advantage. Yet he, too, though he was glad of the dead miller's money, had never really forgiven the match, and to this day considered that his cousin had made a miserable failure of her life, and done her family's name a wrong. He was apt to think lightly of his own mode of existence, but had the decency to drop the family name, and to keep himself, in a general way, aloof from the family presence. He spent most of his time abroad. He had fallen ill this summer, and after coming out of a New York hospital had made up his mind to run over to the old country and look up his cousin. Besides, he was finding the allowance she made him scarcely equal to his needs, which, now that he was growing older and weaker by increasing years and self-indulgence, were multiplying.

But Mrs. Joliffe was too much disturbed by something she had just heard through Charlotte, the elderly parlourmaid, to dwell longer on the hopeless life of the man before her. Charlotte, who had been in the village, had heard a garbled account

of what had taken place at the At Home, with the information that every one was going to cut Priscilla.

She broke out with it suddenly.

"I have just heard that that wretched story of Priscilla's has crept out here," she said, a note of trouble in the hard voice.

Mr. Long gazed abstractedly into the fire.

"It was bound to, sooner or later," he said, indifferently.

"I suppose so! What is done cannot be undone!" she said, with a suppressed passion of bitterness. "She is disgraced! What can all our efforts do to save her? She would do as she would. She would listen to nothing that I said, though I spoke more plainly to her than I have ever done to any one in my life. And she might have listened! I, at least, might have been believed!"

"She had her mother's blood in her," he said, cynically; "it tells in the long run. It was the linen-draper strain coming out."

His cousin looked at him. He sat there, lounging in her dead husband's chair, this descendant of a long line of noble, high-bred ancestry, every feature stamped with the moral and physical degradation into which he had sunk.

A bitter contempt for him, a shamed consciousness and sharp remorse for the rugged honesty of her miller husband, whose life had been ruined through her pride—the despicable pride which was now prompting this man's cynicism—goaded her into bitter personal retort.

"You, at least, have every right to jeer at the degeneracy of a linen-draper's blood!"

The scorn in her eyes stung into some sort of life the dregs of manhood left in him.

"Look here, Catherine," he said, "you needn't taunt a fellow about that miserable affair of Priscilla's. You were glad enough when I told you that I could undo that marriage of hers with a blacksmith's son. You would have done anything so long as it didn't interfere with your religious views," with mocking significance, "to sweep young Deane from your path, and you were glad when I turned up to be your cat's-paw"—with a bitter laugh—"and do your dirty work for you, and so leave you in peace to go on reading your Bible."

"I did not wish to see the girl as unhappy as my folly had made me."

"Bosh!" the bitterness dying out into his usual cynical indifference to all moral consideration; "it was the pride—it dies hard, that old family plant, or weed, as you like to call it. You hated to see another twig of the grand old family tree snapping itself off to try life on a less elevated perch. Young Deane was a very decent chap, and as much a gentleman as they make them—and I'm not sure that it wouldn't have been better to leave Priscilla and him alone."

"The Saltmarsh pride has sunk low enough in you," she said, bitterly, "when you could suggest that it would have been better to leave a woman of your own race to live in dishonour!"

A peculiar look crossed his face.

"Ah, yes," he said, carelessly, "I forgot that; but then she didn't know that Will Deane had a wife already. Neither would you have found it out, only that you were so confoundedly curious, for all your religion and cold water"—with a grim, mocking glance at her table—"at Priscilla, the third member of the Saltmarsh family, making another unfortunate marriage. Upon my word"—with a lazy, amused laugh—"I am beginning to think that there is a cross in the family blood somewhere, and that it was the cause of all these unlucky matches, or else that the family tree has lived on its own juices till they are exhausted; and I am not at all sure," he added, "that a little fresh blood wouldn't do it good. I never saw anything more weedy and sickly than Saltmarsh himself. I saw him tooling a coach at one of the meets in the park last May, and he looked more like a half-melted wax doll than the figure-head of a man. He's no more to be compared to Will Deane than a miserable little dwarf is to a giant. 'Pon my word, Catherine, that Deane is really a splendid chap—a man any man, any woman might be proud of!"

She sat looking at him. She was prepared now for any manner of duplicity in this scion of a noble house.

"Is?" she asked, slowly, a queer kind of fear in her eyes. "You told me once he was dead!"

Again that peculiar look crossed his face.

"Ah, yes! But he isn't. He happens to be alive. He wasn't killed in that mining accident—as I told you. He is alive enough to have saved me from a very uncomfortable death myself only this spring." He spoke with an airy indiffer-

ence, and admired his filbert nails and shapely hands, which had never been spoiled by a stroke of honest labour in his life. "He is mining somewhere Colorado way. I believe I heard he had made a fortune."

"He never was dead," Mrs. Joliffe said, in that slow, hard voice. "It was only one of your lies, to get a little more out of me."

"As a reward for giving you a piece of good news, you mean," he said, with cynical significance. "Be honest for once and confess, Catherine, that you were delighted to hear that he was dead and safe out of the way."

She coloured a dull red under the bitter taunt. But again the sting of its truth kept her silent.

She had been glad to hear that Will Deane was dead—the man who had not only disgraced her niece socially, but dishonoured her woman's life by marrying her with a marriage that was no marriage. She had repented, after her fashion, for the wicked rejoicing she had felt in a fellow-creature's death, and had tried to expiate the sin by adding to the austereness of her daily life.

Part of her self-inflicted penances now was that she should sit silent under the taunt of such a creature as this!

"There is no fear of his returning to England," went on her cousin, carelessly; "he is really a capital chap, and will keep out of Priscilla's way. But—well—it is rather rough on them both," with a greater show of irritable feeling than he ever displayed. "It made me feel rather queer when he saved my life; I should have been over that precipice in another second if he hadn't shot the brute dead. I was driving down a mountain road, and the horse took fright and bolted. Queerly enough, he happened to be riding along the same road, coming in my direction. There wasn't time for him to get near, and he dropped the brute with his rifle just as it was on the brink of the precipice. It really made me feel quite queer when I saw who had saved me. I don't believe much in Providence interfering specially in human affairs, but it actually did seem as if there was just something a little uncanny in his turning up there so unexpectedly at that moment. And then the other night—hang it all!" with

savage anger, "when I saw that look on the girl's face, I should have knocked that woman down if she had been a man." He rose and took a turn in the room. "Where is she now?"

"Gone out for a walk," with a calmness that was betrayed by her eyes.

"To meet all those confounded people who will cut her dead, and—— Hang it all, Catherine, you have acted like a fool! It was all that idiotic pride again. Why didn't you give out plainly when you came here that Priscilla had made an unlucky match, and it would have saved all this!"

"I did as I thought best," with icy anger.

"It was too painful a story to give to the world to discuss. It would have been intolerable! It is one of those things I cannot understand, though the ways of Heaven are always good. To me there is only one thing in the whole matter that keeps one's faith alive as to its justice—that the child died, and that Priscilla is not burdened with that intolerable shame."

He looked at her very queerly. It was difficult to analyse his expression; but there was something in it of unspeakable wonder and contempt for her—the upright, righteous woman.

"Catherine, though you don't know it, you go very near being a very wicked woman!" he said. "Didn't you tell me that when the child died, Priscilla cried all the nights through, and went about in the daytime as if her soul had gone from her? You were glad when she was parted from her husband; you were glad when her baby died; you scarcely cared that her life was left desolate, so that you were not openly disgraced in the eyes of the world you worship, though you imagine that your devotion is given to a different God. 'Pon my soul, Catherine, I'm nothing to boast of, but I'd be ashamed if I hadn't a little more remorse for the suffering we brought on the poor little girl than you have. I think I'll go back to the inn. I would as soon sit down in an Arctic cave as in this sort of glacial atmosphere. You may be a very good woman, but hang it all! I would rather have something more comfortable."

He rose, and left the room before Mrs. Joliffe, speechless with anger and mingled feelings, could find words with which to answer him.